

Message Text

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4040

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UNHCR VS TH

SUBJ: INDOCHINESE BOAT CASES

REF: STATE 296620

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER TO SECSTATE FROM UNHCR AS
REQUESTED REFTEL:

QUOTE. 26 NOVEMBER 1976 (DEAR MR. SECRETARY)

I WISH TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION ONCE AGAIN FOR YOUR
GOVERNMENT'S AGREEMENT, IN MY RECENT MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON,
TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE PROB-
LEM OF PERSONS LEAVING THE INDOCHINESE PENINSULA BY BOAT.
YOUR GOVERNMENT'S DECISION COMBINED WITH THE GOOD WILL OF
OTHER GOVERNMENTS WILL, I HOPE, PROVE SUFFICIENT TO MEET
THIS URGENT PROBLEM.

I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT MANY OTHER COUNTRIES ARE CON-
TRIBUTING TO THE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME OF THIS CATEGORY
OF DISPLACED PERSONS. MY OFFICE IS PURSUING ITS EFFORTS
TO ENSURE THAT THIS WIDE INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION IS
MAINTAINED. FROM THE COMPLETION ON 30 JUNE 1976 OF THE
UNITED STATES' EXTENDED PAROLE PROGRAMME TO MID NOVEMBER,
11 COUNTRIES HAVE ACCEPTED 912 "BOAT PEOPLE," INCLUDING
389 BY THE UNITED STATES AND 523 BY OTHER COUNTRIES.

THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, IN PARTICULAR, HAS A POSITIVE
ATTITUDE TO THE PROBLEM. ALTHOUGH IT FINDS ITSELF UNABLE
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TO MAKE SPECIFIC PROJECTIONS AT THIS STAGE, I UNDERSTAND

INFORMALLY THAT IT INTENDS TO CONTINUE ITS PRESENT PROGRAMME OF RESETTLEMENT OF APPROXIMATELY 1,000 DISPLACED PERSONS FROM INDOCHINA A MONTH AND, IN THIS CONTEXT, IS PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO "BOAT PEOPLE." ADDITIONALLY, SWITZERLAND, AUSTRIA, AND AUSTRALIA HAVE ANNOUNCED THEIR DECISION TO ACCEPT, 20, 20 AND 150 PERSONS RESPECTIVELY. CANADA HAS PLEDGED TO ACCEPT 150 PERSONS AND IS NOW ENVISAGING A SIZABLE INCREASE OF THIS QUOTA.

IT IS MY HOPE THAT YOU WILL AGREE THAT THE UNITED STATES' WISH FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM HAS BEEN MET AND THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT YOUR EFFORTS TO ASSIST THESE UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. NOT ONLY IS TIMELINESS IMPORTANT IN LIGHT OF THE VERY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE "BOAT PEOPLE" FIND THEMSELVES, IT WILL ALSO PREVENT A RESUMPTION OF THE PRACTICE AMONG COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM OF TURNING SUCH PERSONS AWAY, A PRACTICE WHICH, WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, APPEARS TO HAVE LARGELY ABATED FOLLOWING MY EARLIER APPEAL AND REGULAR DEMARCHES OF MY OFFICES IN THE REGION, AT THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL.

I WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY NOTIFICATION FROM THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AS SOON AS THE DECISION TO PROCEED IN GRANTING CONDITIONAL ENTRY TO "BOAT CASES" BECOMES EFFECTIVE, AS THIS WILL NOT ONLY CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS FACILITATING MY DEMARCHES WITH COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM, BUT FURTHER ENCOURAGE THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO MY RENEWED APPEAL FOR FURTHER RESETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES. SADRUDDIN AGA KHAN. UNQUOTE.CATTO

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